

Chief, Economic Research

21 January 1954

Chief, Services Division

Establishment of a File of Data on Who's Who in Economics in the Soviet Bloc

1. The following comments are submitted in connection with your memorandum of 15 January 1954.

2. The recommendations in the staff study on the establishment of a biographical file seemed to rely primarily for justification on the use of this file as an educational device. It seems to be designed to force analysts to use existing research facilities which have information on significant economic personalities. I do not believe that this objective is sufficiently important to justify the work involved in carrying out the proposal outlined in the staff study. This division is aware of the importance of following personalities, but we have chosen to solve the problem by scheduling a number of projects designed to study the organization and functions of specific Soviet ministries. A study of significant personalities would be an important part of these projects. We feel that the kind of study that we have in mind would make an excellent reference tool and training device for our analysts and see no need to separate out the biographic aspect for specific formal attention such as is contemplated in the proposal.

3. I think that the general problem of teaching analysts how to use special materials is much more important than the pinpoint problem of studying personalities per se. I feel that the organization and functions studies would be much more useful in connection with the exploitation of special materials.

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